

Yoga for Seniors set for Jan. 13

Please note the change of date from yearbook

Since many of us seek physical and spiritual renewal in the new year, our January program seems especially fitting. "Yoga for Seniors" will be held at Mercyhurst University on Saturday, Jan. 13, at 10 a.m. in Zurn Hall. The date has been changed from Jan. 6.

Park in the Mary D'Angelo Performing Arts Center lot, walk straight back to the dinosaur, enter the adjacent DanceSpace door, and proceed to the (back) Hunter dance studio.

Our speaker, Solveig Santillano, is an Associate Professor of Dance at Mercyhurst University. Originally from Sioux Falls, SD, Ms. Santillano holds an MFA from Hollins University, a Master of Arts and Liberal Studies from Wesleyan University, and a BFA from the Julliard School of Dance.



Solveig Santillano

She is also a Registered Yoga Teacher with over 500 hours of training and has had additional yoga teacher training at Open Sky Yoga.

She has earned certifications with Judith Hanson Lasater and continues to study with Douglas Brooks and Peentz Dubble.

Ms. Santillano is particularly interested in the therapeutic potential of movement and is a Registered Somatic Movement Therapist.

Ms. Santillano will tell us a little about her own yoga journey, describe the benefits of yoga for aging bodies, and demonstrate simple exercises that we can do in our chairs.

Branch raises \$390 for LAF at luncheon

Hello Friends,

As you know, AAUW's mission is to support women and girls in the workplace and in education through advocacy. While some advocacy effort is for influencing policy, some of it has to be in the legal field.

As per AAUW statements, "Unfair pay, pregnancy discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault and violations of Title IX..." are all barriers women run into, hindering their advancement towards realizing their potential.

AAUW's Legal Advocacy Fund "... addresses these barriers by informing people of their rights and using the legal system to seek justice and change. LAF was created in 1981 by AAUW members and has provided millions of dollars to

Con't. on P. 3

President's Message

The AAUW Pennsylvania Annual Conference is scheduled for April 5-7, 2024. The Conference title is "Evolution of the Fight—Looking Back to Move Forward."

One of the planned conference sessions will be a panel discussion focusing on branches which have been in existence for 100 years or more. Because AAUW Erie Branch is included in that designation, I will be a panel member.

The panel discussion will focus on how branches have sustained themselves through years of change. To prepare myself for the panel discussion, I will be immersing myself in AAUW Erie history. If you have a history nugget that you believe has helped to sustain our branch, I welcome your input.



Loretta Seigley

Currently, Erie Branch monthly meetings and speakers, study groups and numerous community outreach opportunities continue to strengthen and sustain our organization. Our fall in-person branch meetings included engaging speakers who spoke on a wide range of topics. Our Annual Holiday Luncheon was well attended and members present enjoyed delicious food, connections with friends and wonderful entertainment. Study groups continue to have strong attendance and Edie Cultu's Global Friends draws sizable crowds each month.

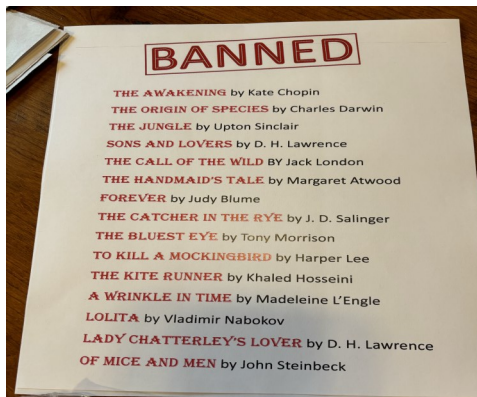
The New Year promises more great opportunities for member involvement including monthly meetings and speakers, study group meetings and community outreach opportunities. Member involvement in the past has helped to sustain AAUW Erie Branch and is also what continues to strengthen us for the future. AAUW Erie Branch is your organization! I encourage you to keep it strong - attend monthly meetings, get involved in study groups and community outreach opportunities.

Let's be sure that AAUW Erie Branch continues to build upon its strong foundation. Wouldn't it be great if AAUW Erie Branch could celebrate a 200-year Anniversary in the future!

I hope you will all enjoy a very Happy 2024!



Book Club celebrates
 Jane Springer, (above, left) received the Banned Book t-shirt at the Book Club's December holiday lunch. Attendees also received bookmarks featuring the banned titles.
Photos courtesy of Barb Hutzelman.



Legal Advocacy Fund

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balance the scales of justice for people working toward gender equity through the legal system."

AAUW describes this Fund's mission as "... support(ing) brave plaintiffs seeking legal redress for equal pay, Title IX, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and tenure denial violations."

\$100,000 is allocated for this purpose annually.

It is up to you and I to keep this Fund strong for all women and girls. At our Holiday Luncheon we raised \$390! If you were not there this year, you can still add to this sum. Moreover, the Board, committee leaders and staff of AAUW have announced that they will double all donations made through December 31st, which adds to the tax benefit! So please consider as generous a donation as you can before the end of the year.

Any donation you wish to make will be entirely tax deductible. Checks should be made out to AAUW Erie Branch, Inc. and sent to our Branch address: AAUW Erie Branch, P.O. Box 9264, Erie, Pa. 16505.

Thank you in advance and have a great Holiday Season and a wonderful New Year!!

Asuman Baskan, Funds Chair

Change of address listed

Life member Heidi Steffy has a new address.

She has moved to 220 Southwestern Drive, #121, Lakewood, NY 14750.

Her email is heidisteffy67@gmail.com and her phone number is 814-450-3916

Endorsed bills reintroduced

A number of AAUW-endorsed bills were reintroduced in Congress in September, including: The Schedules That Work Act and Part-Time Worker Bill of Rights Act, which would give workers more certainty about their hours and incomes and strengthen protections and benefits for part-time workers.



Photos courtesy of Sarah Larson and Barb Hutzelman

Upon request: Luncheon poem

"What's good for kidneys?" she said. "Cherries," said I.
She nodded her head.
"I bought them," she said.
I smiled. I knew!

"Let's have lunch," said I.
"We can talk produce there." "Produce- nothing" - said she,
"I have things to share."

Thus began a journey so new.
"Stop!" thought I -
Who are these women:
So smart - so busy- So full of giving -
"Pay attention," my brain whispered,
"They know something of living."

"Come to a workshop," said they.
My brain whispered- "go-"
I met folks from six different countries
And even places I didn't know.

"Come to a meeting," they said.
My brain was aching for more.
It wouldn't let me say no.
I had to explore.

"Politics," said they — "Great," said I.
I worry about the news.
And just when I thought I had it right.
"Gourmet," they said,
"tomorrow night!"

My stomach said:
"Finally, something for me."
"Quiet," said I,
"my brain needs nourishing."
"But look," said stomach- "books, talks, politics- discussions,
That part's flourishing.

"Never enough said I.
I got to know these Women:
creative, smart, active, sharing, well-read and so very ground
ed.
I felt at home. I felt welcome
and so very fortunate
to have found them.

To each of you I say: look around -
You are unique -
there is no one like you-
You add to my life;
you add to each other.
I am grateful that you take me as I am
I can't be any younger.
I love you all.

By Ann Marie Kumhera

Public Policy Highlights

The evidence is clear. Paid family and medical leave would not only be good for working Pennsylvanians, but it **would be great for Pennsylvania's businesses.**

There is legislation moving through the House right now that could make paid family leave a reality in PA - **tell your state legislator to support it.**

The bipartisan-supported **Family Care Act (HB181)** passed through the House Labor & Industry Committee and is poised to come to the floor for a full House vote.

HB181 recognizes something we already know to be true: family takes care of family. By establishing a paid family medical leave program in Pennsylvania, the Family Care Act would allow:

- parents to be there for their newborn following birth or care for their child during an illness
- family members to provide critical care for elderly loved ones
- workers to care for themselves following a major surgery

As poll after poll shows, paid leave is strongly supported by both Republicans, Democrats and Independents. This is a **pro-working Pennsylvanians** issue that puts families first.

In addition, businesses – large and small – make more money when they offer paid family and medical leave, as evidenced in the Children First report, **"Paid Family & Medical Leave: An Essential Investment in Pennsylvania Business and Their Employees."**

Join us in this fight by **urging your state representative** to make sure that **working Pennsylvanians get access to a paid family and medical leave program that they've earned.**

Urge them to **put families first** by supporting the Family Care Act (HB181) voting yes when it comes to the House floor for a full vote.

Thank you,
Children First's Take Action Team
Dan O'Brien
dano@childrenfirstpa.org

Submitted by Ellen DiPlacido, branch public policy chair



Thank you!

I just wanted to say thank you again for your help yesterday. This partnership with AAUW has been a blessing to our school and I'm looking forward to more opportunities to work together in the new year.

Happy Holidays,
Shanna Potter
Harding School

In memoriam

ROSALYNN CARTER **8/18/1927—11/19/2023**

Rosalynn Carter was an American writer, activist and humanitarian. She was one of the most politically astute and active of all American first ladies. During her years in public service, she is perhaps best known for being a leading advocate for women's rights and mental health support.

She was one of the most politically active of all the wives during a husband's presidency. She sat in on Cabinet meetings and also represented the President in meetings with domestic and foreign leaders. Mrs. Carter took notes, but never spoke.

In 1977, at the beginning of the Carter presidency, she supported the ratification of the ERA at the celebration of the International Women's Year in Houston, Texas.

Although accompanied by Betty Ford and Lady Bird Johnson the campaign was unsuccessful. President Carter eventually extended the deadline for ratification until 1982.

Ms. Carter served as an active honorary chair of the President's Commission on Mental Health. In 1980 she testified before a Senate committee - she was the second to appear before Congress. Eleanor Roosevelt was the first. Of her priorities mental health was the highest. She served as honorary chair and took an active role in the President's Commission on Mental Health.

Rosalynn Carter represented her husband in many meetings with domestic and foreign leaders. Helping refugees, particularly the children, became a special cause for her.

Ms. Carter was the first of all the First Ladies to keep her own office in the East Wing.

Her Chief of Staff earned the same salary as the President's Chief of Staff. Two years into the Carter Presidency TIME Magazine called her the "second most powerful person in the United States."

After leaving the White House, she continued in her efforts to improve Mental Health care.

She also promoted other projects like HABITAT FOR HUMANITY, founded the Carter Center, a non-profit human rights organization and established the ROSALYNN CARTER INSTITUTE FOR CAREGIVING (RCI).

In 1997 she and Jimmy Carter were awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom. To read more search WIKEPEDIA or Biography & Facts BRITANNICA.

By Ellen DiPlacido, branch public policy chair

She is perhaps best known for being a leading advocate for women's rights and mental health support.

Branch Study Groups

Book Discussion

Candy Brown will be leading our discussion on January's book selection, "Lessons in Chemistry," by Bonnie Gamus.

Any member is welcome to join us on Jan. 4 (Thursday) at 1 p.m. at the Millcreek Branch Library.

Global Friends

Global Friends will meet Monday, Jan. 22, at 7 p.m. at Edie's home, 638 Vermont Ave.

The program on Resettling the Afghan refugees will be given by Patty Stubber, who is working directly with the Afghan refu-

gees, and Nadia Mir Ali Iqbal, a recipient of our RISE scholarship.

Gourmet

Gourmet will meet at Smugglers Wharf at the dock on Jan. 26 at 5 p.m. We already have 18 people signed up so please RSVP if you haven't done so yet to Nickie Azicri at 814-835-3780 or text speedyzeek8@gmail.com

Politalk

Politalk will meet on Jan. 18 from 2 to 4 p.m. at Asuman's home.

January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4 Book 1 p.m. Millcreek Branch	5	6
7	8 Board mtg. 6:30 p.m. Zoom	9	10	11	12	13 Branch meeting 10 a.m. Mer- cyhurst
14	15	16	17	18 Politalk 2 p.m. at Asuman's	19	20
21	22 Global Friends 7 p.m. Edie's	23	24	25	26 Gourmet 5 p.m. Smug- glers	27
28	29	30	31			



Erie Branch ♦ Founded in 1902

P.O. Box 9264 Erie PA 16505

AAUW's Mission

AAUW advances equity for women and girls through education, philanthropy, and research. By joining AAUW you belong to a community that breaks through educational and economic barriers so that all women have a fair chance. In principle and in practice AAUW values and seeks a diverse membership. There shall be no barriers to full participation in the organization on the basis of gender, race, creed, age, sexual orientation, national origin, disability or class.

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